

SENATE
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting - March 18, 1977

Present: Chairman Gibson
Senator Foote
Senator Gojack
Senator Raggio
Senator Schofield

Chairman Gibson opened the twenty-third meeting of the Government Affairs Committee at 1:30 P.M. with a quorum present.

Chairman Gibson informed those present that testimony would be taken but that the salary schedule would finally be resolved by a sub-committee of the Senate and Assembly Committees and one bill will be processed.

SB-29

Enables elected county officers to receive longevity pay increases on a year-by-year basis. (BDR 20-280)

SB-161

Removes limitations on amount of salary payable to certain state and county employees. (BDR 20-552)

Chairman Gibson told the audience that we would be taking testimony on this bill but that it would be re-referred to Finance.

Senator Hernstadt testified to the committee indicating that they are losing many good people in certain state jobs because of this 95% limitation on their salary. He suggested raising the Governor's salary to as much as \$70,000. He felt that all this bill does is remove the statutory limits as they presently exist. This would allow more flexibility in the salary range for such jobs as doctors or psychiatrists would be applying for. Also noted was the administrators of certain hospitals in this state. The Senator wanted the Committee to look at some State jobs with the same degree that a businessman looks at his business.

Chairman asked Senator Hernstadt if he had a list of the State and local people that we have lost due to the limitations on salary. The Senator had no such list but felt from the input he has received the number is considerable.

Senator Gojack indicated that a few years back there was a considerable backlog in state jobs, did this still exist?

Senator Hernstadt responded by stating that there was indeed a backlog but he was concerned about the certain few jobs that do exist where in the business world they would be receiving much more in salary than they could hope to get with the state. In these fields the Senator felt that there was no backlog but a lack of proper applicants to fill the vacancy.

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Senator Raggio expressed concern with the "whip saw" effect this type of legislation could produce. He felt that it would be used by other agencies to improve their salaries and where would you stop the whole thing.

Roger Trounday, Human Resources Director stated to the committee that they have had problems with the salaries that are currently being provided to their psychiatrists and physicians. They have advertised across the country but only have one applicant. These applicants have to pay their own way for an interview. Another problem with the 95% factor is compaction. As an example Mr. Trounday stated that the Welfare Director has an enormous job to carry out for the state. He is losing a total of \$3,180. this year alone. He carries out difficult programs and does it well. The State Health Director is also compacted and is losing a great deal of money also. Mr. Trounday stated that he would like to have the legislature set the salaries for those who have reached the 95% range.

Bob Gagnier, S.N.E.A. testified in favor of this bill also. Mr. Gagnier noted that during the last session some salaries were adopted but couldn't be put into effect due to the 95% limitation. The Senate has a new list of salaries but they also will not be effective unless the 95% limitation is lifted. He also felt that no one has addressed the problem of retirement. If the salaries are not paid they will also be short changed with regards to the retirement money due them. They have sixty-one classified employees that are compacted by this law. They range from a loss of \$29.00 per year to a loss of \$7,317 per year. The average loss to employees affected by this compaction is \$1,368.

Mr. Gagnier concluded by stating that they feel it is an inequity to those employees who work for the State for a long time and are very valuable. There is also a situation where the administrator could be paid a lower salary that the people he supervises. It was their hope that the bill would pass.

Fred Hillerby, Nevada Hospital Association, testified that they have a great deal of trouble getting physicians to be administrators in the hospitals. The amount of money in other hospitals that goes for the administrators salary is considerably higher that we can afford.

There was no further testimony given on this bill and no action will be taken as it will be re-referred to Finance.

The following bills will be considered as a group.

SB-29

Enables elected county officers to receive longevity pay increases on a year-by year basis. (BDR 20-280)

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SB-157

Increases salaries of Elected county officers. (BDR 20-281)

AB-228

Removes special provision from general law on salaries of county officers and deletes reference to unconstitutional law. (BDR 20-335)

Homer Rodriguez, representing the Assessors of the State, testified in favor of SB-29. They feel that they should receive this 1% as it becomes due at the end of their first term. Chairman noted that the purpose was to recognize the terms of service and not to note the new person coming in.

Roy Neighbors, Nye County, stated that this bill (SB-29) was introduced by their county through Mr. Beko, District Attorney. Some of the counties were paying, after the fifth year, 5%. They suggested that after the four year term to pay the extra 1% then and from then on after each year.

Bob Broadbent, County Commissioners, indicated that they were in favor of SB-29.

Mr. Broadbent stated that they also endorsed SB-157 and wanted it to be effective the first of July. They are faced with the same compression problems as everyone else. He stated that many people in the law areas (D.A.'s office) are lost because of the salary limitations.

Senator Raggio asked if they have considered SB-320. Mr. Broadbent indicated that he hadn't had the time to take a poll on that bill, but feels that they would support it.

Chairman Gibson asked if the Clark County officials requested a raise and Mr. Broadbent stated that they have asked for a 30% pay raise.

Larry Hicks, District Attorney - Washoe County, testified on SB-157. (See Attachment #1) Mr. Hicks began by requesting a 35% salary increase. Wants the District Attorney to be treated like the rest of his employees, i.e. cost of living raises, merit raises. Mr. Hicks discussed the inflation rate and made a comparison to the salary received by the District Attorney in 1967 and today. He pointed out the inflation rates, increased duties and responsibilities to the committee to further substantiate his justification for the increase in salary. He concluded this by stating that the District Attorney today makes about \$6,000. less than the District Attorney in 1967. Also noted that the Sherrif is making \$6,500. less today than in 1967. Wants to have the elected officials receive the same merit and cost of living increases that the regular employees do.

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Bob Broadbent also wanted to add that they weren't able to pay the retirement on the elected officials either.

Mayor Jacobson, Carson City, testified on SB-157, agreed with the testimony that Mr. Hicks gave and felt that their problems were very similar but since Carson City is growing so quickly it has had a bigger problem with the District Attorney's office. Mayor Jacobson indicated that they have had a 300% increase in population and they also have some people that are making more money than the elected officials. They would also like to have a 30% increase in salary, half starting in July and the other half in January of 1979.

Robert Manley, Elko District Attorney, testified on SB-157 and reiterated many of the problems that Mr. Hicks posed to the committee. They feel that they are on the same level as Carson City and they don't have as much help but have a larger case load. Also they support longevity pay at the end of the first four years. (SB-29).

Mr. Neighbors, representing Nye County, testified on SB-157. They were in favor of the bill.

Chairman Gibson concluded testimony on SB-29, SB-157 and AB-228 by stating that these bills will be taken into consideration with the Assembly bills.

SB-307

Provides for alternative method of electing county commissioners in certain counties. (BDR 20-994)

Bob Broadbent stated that eleven of the fourteen commissioners were against this bill.

Senator Raggio asked if the 15% petition factor was a problem.

Mr. Broadbent felt that the bill will lead to a biennial problem. They were generally dissatisfied with the bill. They also felt that the complexity of the bill would lead to misunderstanding at the polls.

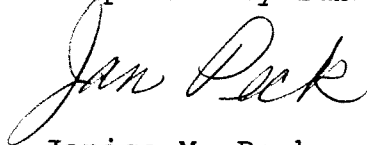
Senator Raggio stated that the present law notes 35% of the population must sign a petition but that Mr. Daykin (legal counsel) felt that they would have trouble justifying the 35% constitutionally. The 15% rate was more acceptable.

Senator Raggio requested that we hold SB-307 until there is a full committee and take action at that time.

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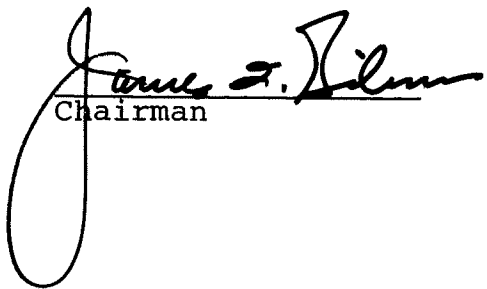
With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Janice M. Peck
Committee Secretary

Approved:



Chairman



LARRY R. HICKS
District Attorney

Washoe County Courthouse
South Virginia and Court Streets
P.O. Box 11130 • Reno, Nevada 89510

March 14, 1977

The Honorable James I. Gibson
Chairman, Senate Government Affairs
Committee
Nevada State Legislature
Carson City, Nevada 89701

Re: Salaries of Elected Officials


Dear Senator Gibson:

On behalf of the Washoe County elected officials, I am enclosing herewith a copy of a memorandum prepared in support of our request for at least a 35% increase in our salaries. Because of the large amount of this requested increase, we have spent a considerable amount of time preparing this memorandum in explanation of our request. We have also previously forwarded the memorandum to the Washoe County Commissioners and to the members of the Washoe County Legislative Delegation.

We are not requesting any more of an increase than the amount of inflation since our salaries were last set. Most importantly, what we have requested is salary adjustment based upon inflation, increased responsibilities, and adjustment to comparable salary levels paid to other full-time public employees within Washoe County and the northern part of the State. It is also worthy of note that pursuant to the Dodge Act, virtually all local public employees regularly receive cost of living and merit increases which add up to substantially more than what we have requested.

We would appreciate any support you can lend us in regard to our request and are available at any time you should have any questions concerning this matter.

Very truly yours,


LARRY R. HICKS
District Attorney

LRH/rg
cc: Committee Members

Enc.

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REVISED AGENDA: E. 3-17-77 SENATE
 NOTE ADDITIONAL BILLS & TIME CHANGE
 TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS
 NOTE TIME CHANGE
 Date Friday, 3-18-77 Time 1:30 PM Room 243

| Bills or Resolutions to be considered | Subject | Counsel requested* |
|--|---|-----------------------|
| SB 29 | SUMMARY—Enables elected county officers to receive longevity pay increases on a year-by-year basis. (BDR 20-280) | |
| SB-157 | SUMMARY—Increases salaries of elected county officers. (BDR 20-281) | |
| SB-161 | SUMMARY—Removes limitations on amount of salary payable to certain state and county employees. (BDR 20-552) | |
| AB-228 | SUMMARY—Removes special provision from general law on salaries of county officers and deletes reference to unconstitutional law. (BDR 20-335) | Yes |

FOR COMMITTEE WORK:

SB-307 SUMMARY—Provides for alternative method of electing county commissioners in certain counties. (BDR 20-994)

*Please do not ask for counsel unless necessary.